



Midwest to the Middle East: Learn to Catch Phish from a Special Ops Veteran and Phisher

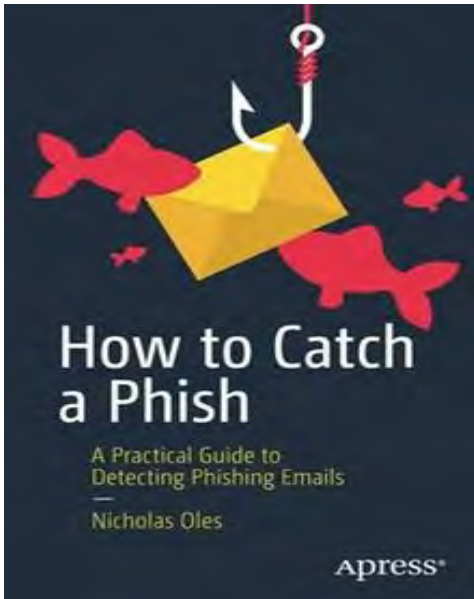


Agenda

- ▶ Introduction
- ▶ Phishing Overview
- ▶ How to Scan an Email
 - ▶ Sender/Recipient Verification
 - ▶ Greetings
 - ▶ Links and Attachments
 - ▶ Tools to Use
 - ▶ Handling and Reporting
- ▶ Cool Phish in the Wild



Who Am I?



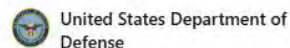
- ▶ 15 years in IT/Cybersecurity
- ▶ Military, government, civilian roles
- ▶ Published author and speaker
- ▶ Responded to thousands of email and security incidents
- ▶ Special Operations Advisor and veteran
- ▶ BS in Accounting MS in Cybersecurity
- ▶ 7 industry certifications
- ▶ 1000's of hours of formalized government and private sector training



Nick Oles [Add verification badge](#)

Cybersecurity Advisor | Educator | Published Author | Cyber and Special Operations Veteran |

Baltimore, Maryland, United States • [Contact info](#)



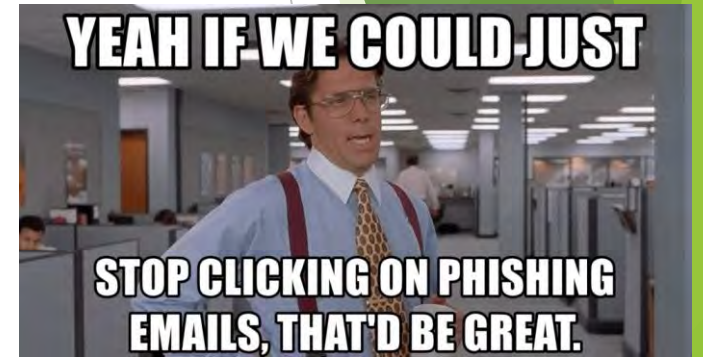
What is Phishing?!

- ▶ Threat actor uses technology to deceive an individual to take a specific action.
 - ▶ Multiple social engineering techniques to get you, a human, to:
 - ▶ Click a link
 - ▶ Provide sensitive information
 - ▶ Interacting with an attachment



Phishing Why?

- ▶ 91% of successful data breaches start with a phishing attack. (Verizon)
- ▶ Google blocks over 100 million phishing emails a day.
- ▶ Phishing works, attackers aren't stopping.
- ▶ Training videos and simulated phishing attacks aren't good enough, if they were this wouldn't be a problem.
- ▶ Phishing simulations typically yield 2-8% click rates.

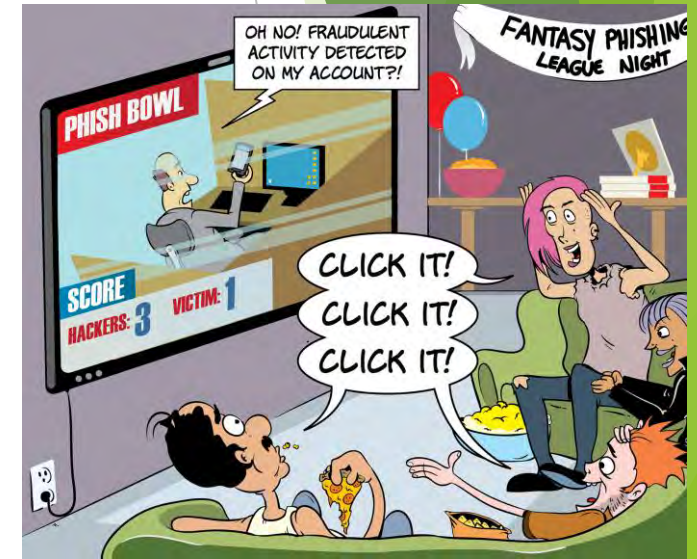


People vs Technologies



Phishing Impacts

- ▶ Unnecessary training, headaches, loss of funds.
- ▶ Criminals make money, nation states fund things (North Korea).
- ▶ The average cost of a data breach caused by phishing reached \$4.88 million in 2024.
- ▶ Business Email Compromise (BEC) can crush a company. Insert tire story.



What type of Techniques?!

Social Engineering Tactics to Watch For

Knowing the red flags can help you avoid becoming a victim.



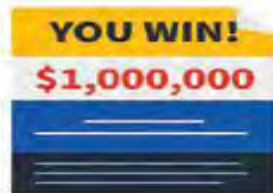
Your 'friend' sends you a strange message.



Your emotions are heightened.



The request is urgent.



The offer feels too good to be true.

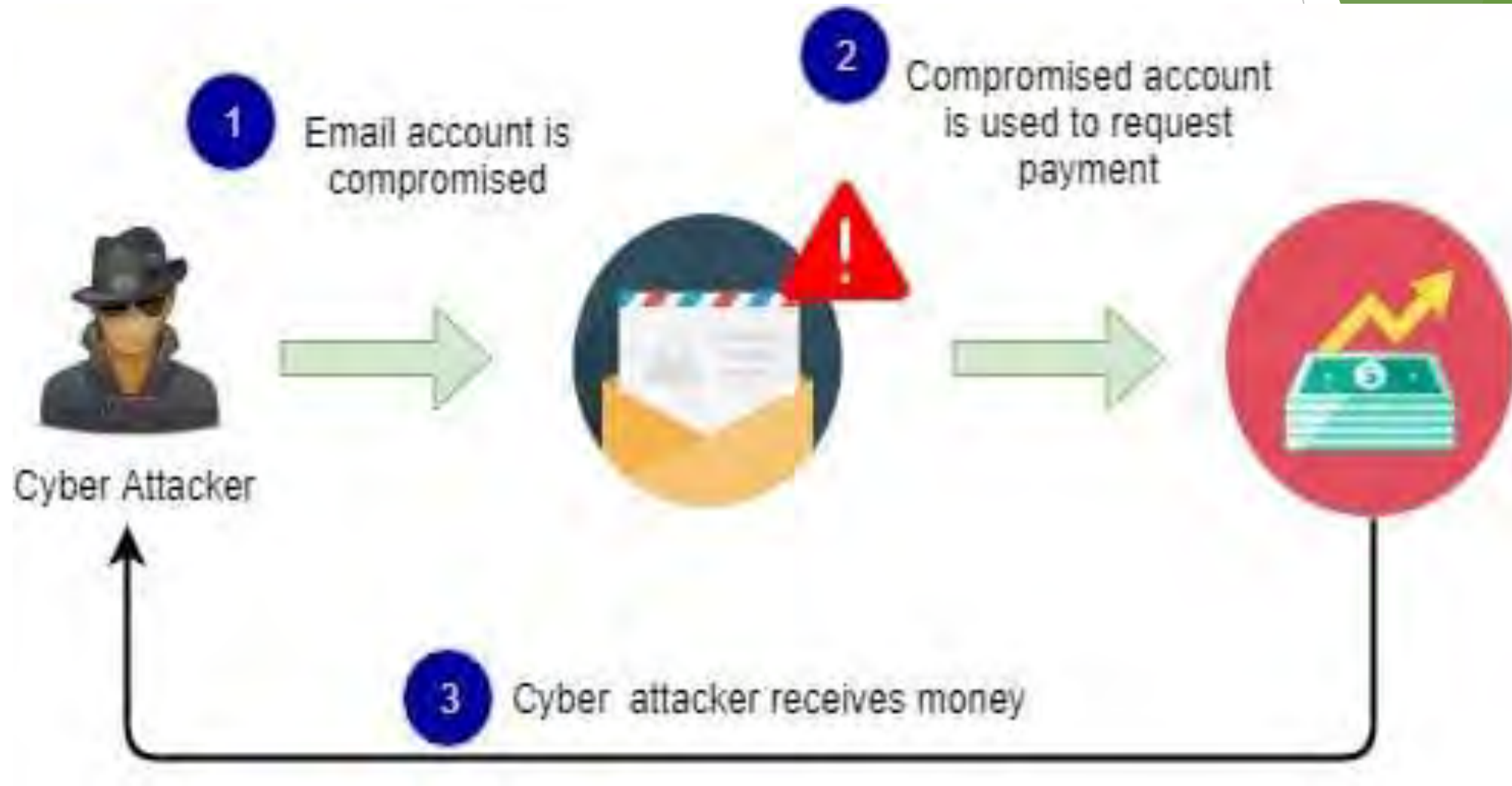


You're receiving help you didn't ask for.



The sender can't prove their identity.

Business Email Compromise



Where to Start?

- Brief Scan of the email, step by step.

VetSecCon '24 - Congratulations - Your Talk is Accepted and Next Steps

Inbox

Tom Marsland

to: Tom, bcc: me

Thu, Oct 3, 11:39 PM



Hello from the Team at VetSec!

It's been a crazy year. Thank you for your patience while we worked on the schedules and confirmed our conference platform was available again this year. If you're receiving this email, your talk or workshop was selected for VetSecCon '24!

Thank you for your drive and dedication to give back to our community. As a next step, please review the day and time of your talk(s) and reply to this email, confirming your attendance! Please note - all times in the schedule are listed in Pacific Standard Time.

Once confirmed, you'll receive an invite to our RingCentral Events Platform and you'll be added to our schedule and social media lineup!

If you have a conflict or question, please reply. For conflicts we will do the best we can, but it is hard to accommodate on such a tight conference schedule.

Best,

Tom



Tom Marsland

Board Chairman/CEO

VetSec, Inc.

(360) 865-5788 x101

tom.marsland@veteransec.org

www.veteransec.org



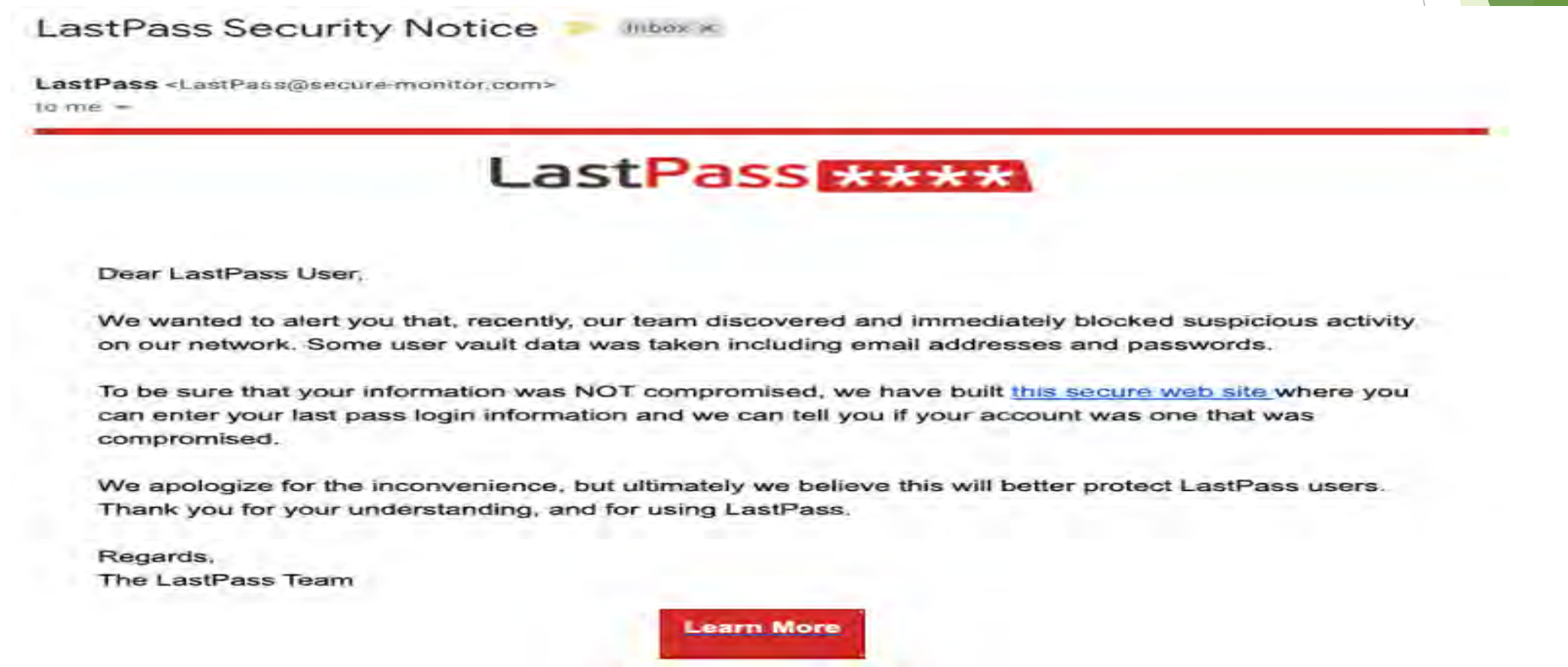
One attachment • Scanned by Gmail



Con Schedule - 2...

Sender/Recipient Address

- ▶ Scanning an email from top to bottom, starting with the sender and recipient addresses. What do you see?



Impersonation Using Sender Address



The diagram shows the email address <onlinebanking@e.chase.com> with arrows pointing to its components: 'Display Name' points to 'onlinebanking', 'Domain' points to 'e.chase.com', 'Subdomain' points to 'e', and 'Top Level Domain' points to 'com'.



Thu 10/29/2020 2:48 AM

Chase Fraud Alert <onlinebanking@e.chase.com>

Action Needed: Activity On Your Chase Debit or ATM Card on 10/28/2020 [MALD ID: 5324223]

Кому



Please do not reply to this message*****

War Story/Practical Exercise



raytheon.com



The anti-phishing domain name search engine and
DNS monitoring service

r-raytheon.com



5.22.145.16

Visit:
www.dnstwister.report

identified 360, checked 360, resolved 73

Protect your business from phishing attacks and IP infringement!

Subscribe and we'll alert you as soon as someone registers a domain similar to raytheon.com.

Subscribe Now!

Free 28-day trials available and no credit card required!

Found (73)

Available (257)

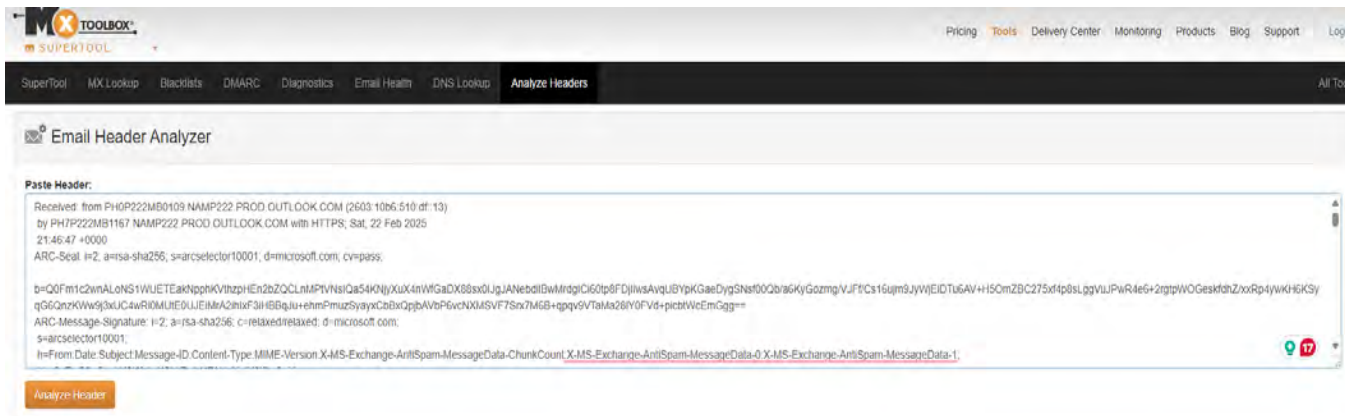
[export csv](#)

Domain	IP Address / A record	MX record?	
paytheon.com	3.130.253.23	×	
r-raytheon.com	5.22.145.16	×	
taytheon.com	5.22.145.16	×	
daytheon.com	216.239.32.21	×	
baytheon.com	13.248.169.48	×	
raytheon.cn	5.22.145.121	×	
raytheon.de	5.22.145.121	×	

Email Headers

- ▶ An email header contains technical details about the email origin and path to destination.
 - ▶ Can determine original sender email address.
 - ▶ Source IP of sender.
 - ▶ Reply-to mailbox.
 - ▶ Security configurations like DKIM, DMARC, and SPF records.

- ▶ Mx Toolbox www.mxtoolbox.com



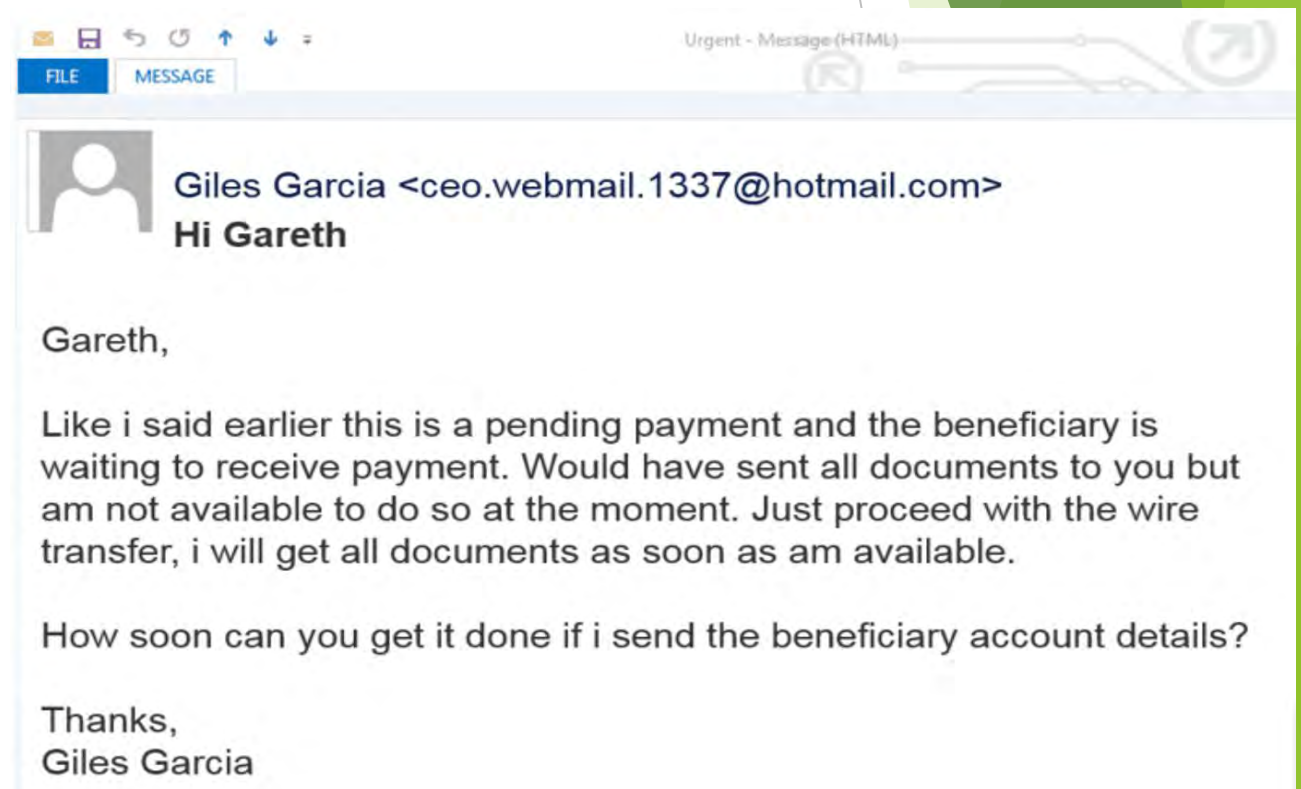
```
X-Pm-Content-Encryption: end-to-end
X-Pm-Origin: internal
Subject: Seattle trip
To: Kristen Novak <kristennovak@proton.me>
From: Eric Norbert <eric.norbert@proton.me>
Date: Tue, 14 Mar 2023 16:29:46 +0000
Mime-Version: 1.0
Content-Type: text/html
Message-Id:
<hvl1fNSqLpe7Va0W4v18oXzhimc9lBJQLK0jSg0zJtRzWZkzfohHSH0h5yTrIXn_pQ76eZMB7EzXQG
R3Q15LGKQGec9ZNdSuLgp1rj6TUXI=@proton.me>
X-Pm-Spamscore: 0
Received: from mail.protonmail.ch by mail.protonmail.ch; Tue, 14 Mar 2023
16:29:53 +0000
X-Original-To: kristennovak@proton.me
Return-Path: <eric.norbert@proton.me>
Delivered-To: kristennovak@proton.me
```

ABOUT EMAIL HEADERS

This tool will make email headers human readable by parsing them according to RFC 822. Email headers are present on every email you receive via the Internet and can provide valuable diagnostic information like hop delays, anti-spam results and more. If you need help getting copies of your email headers, [just read this tutorial](#).

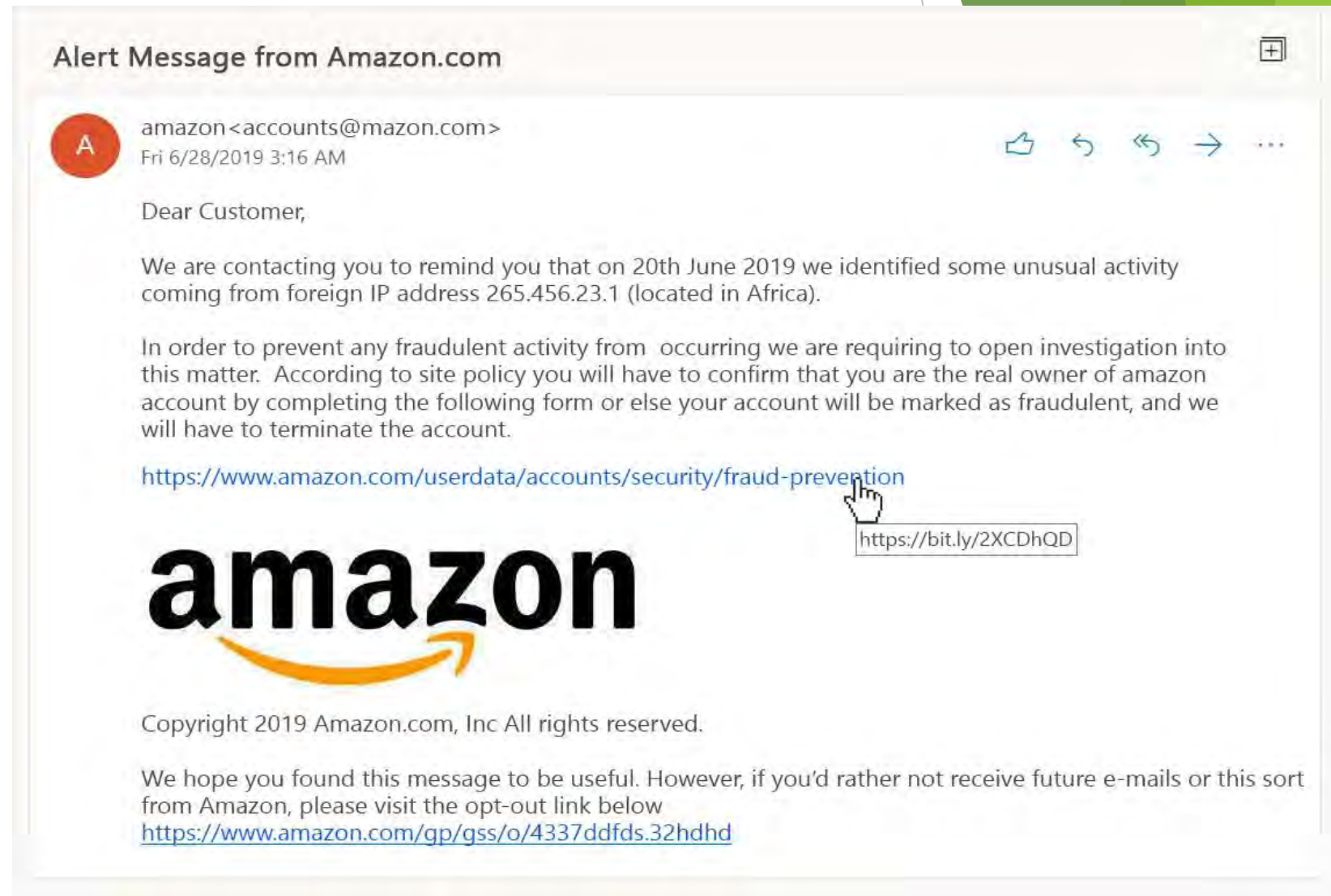
Greetings!!

- Review the greeting. This is used to establish trust; does it make sense? Is it generic/accurate?

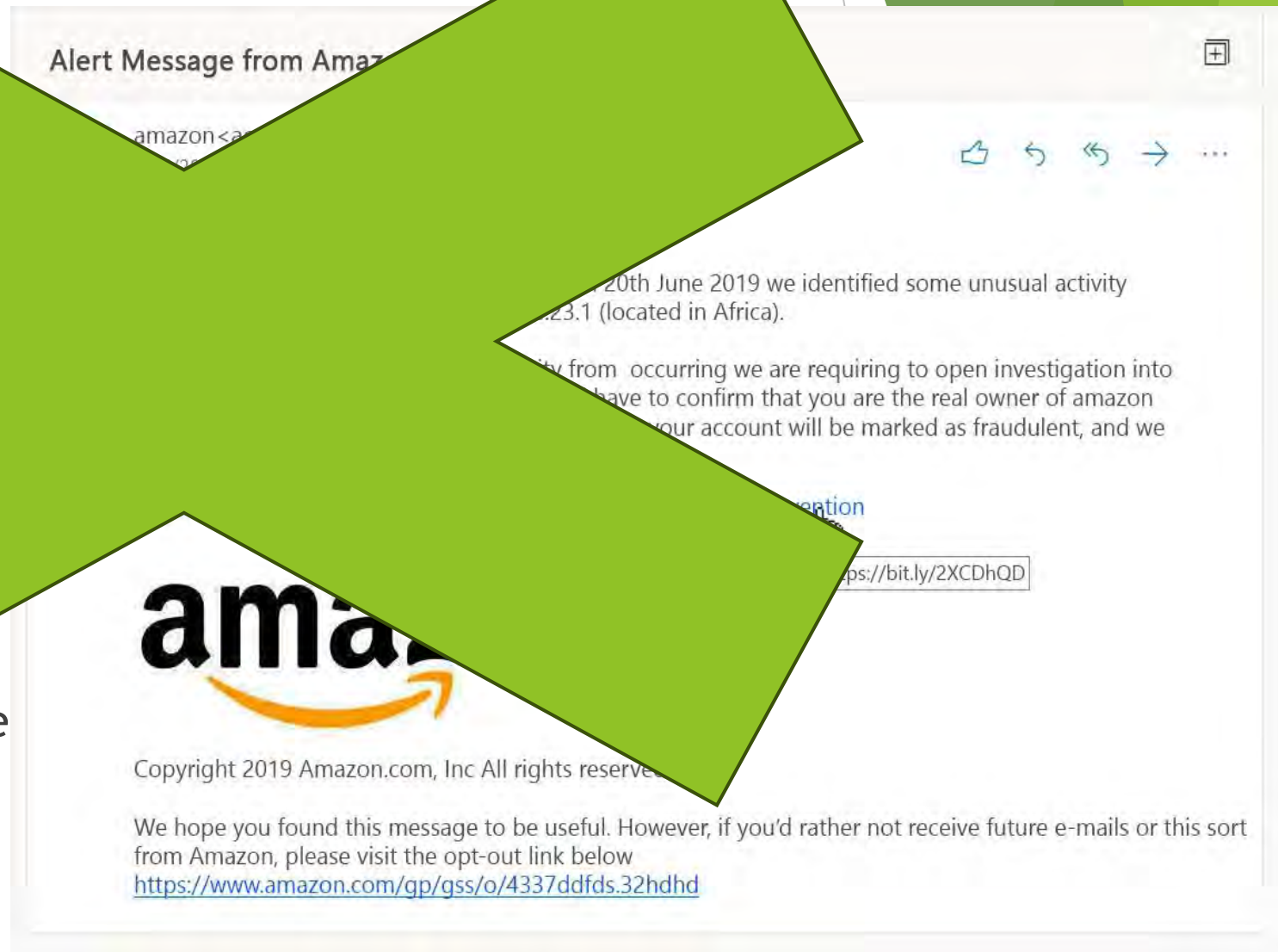


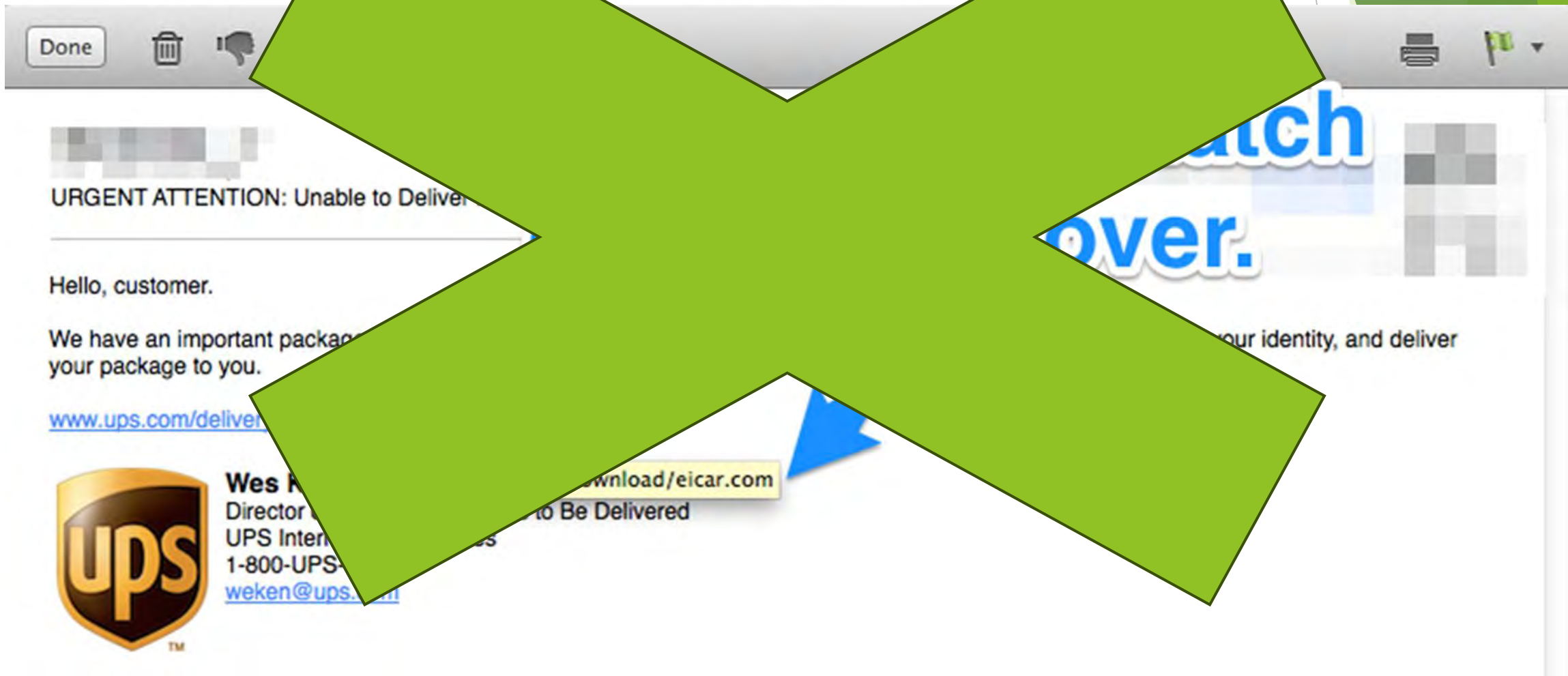
Content Analysis?

- ▶ Review the content objectively.
 - ▶ Sense of urgency
 - ▶ Negative action
 - ▶ Windfall
 - ▶ False contest
 - ▶ Established trust
 - ▶ Empathy/support



- ▶ Hover over the link to see the intended recipient
 - ▶ Does it match the intended recipient?
 - ▶ Is it shorter/longer than expected?
 - ▶ Spelled correctly
 - ▶ Out of character
- ▶ Right Click if need to be CAUTIOUS
- ▶ <https://unit.amazon.com/rare-phish-header-refresh/#:~:text=42%20researchers%20observe%20many>





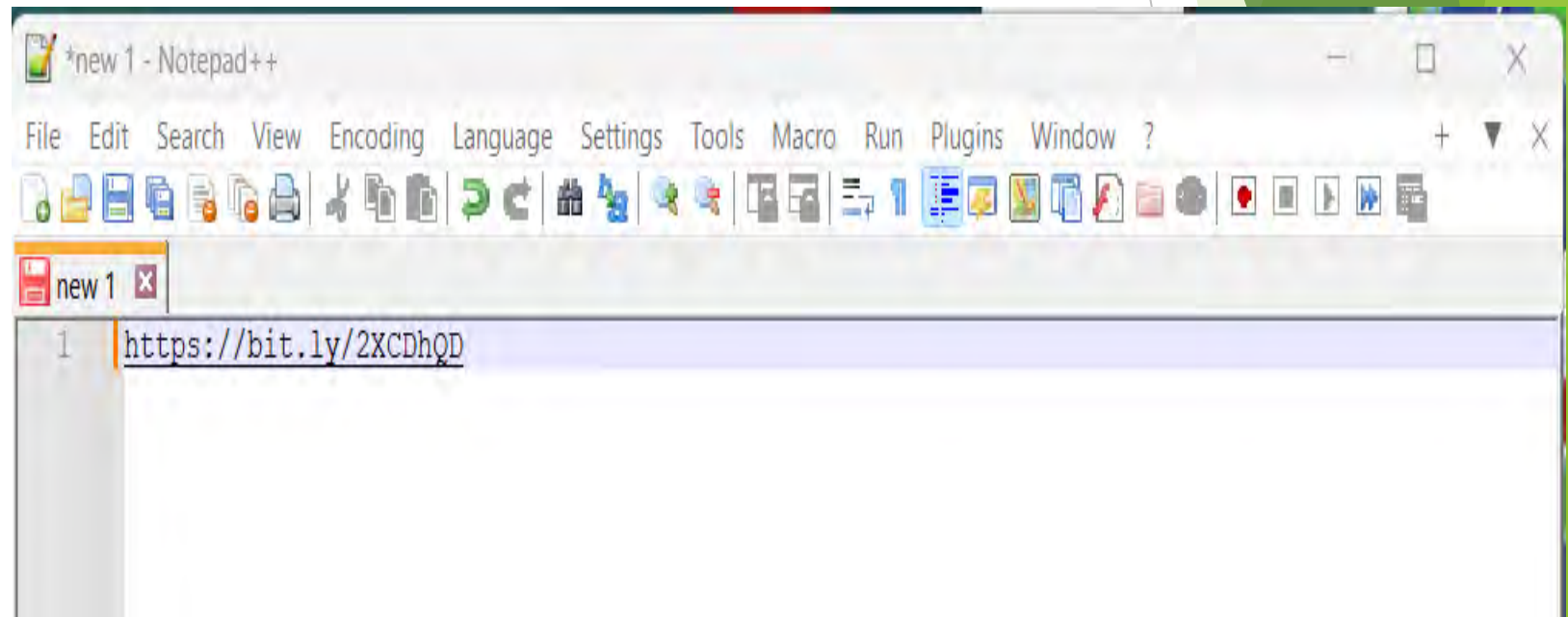
Link Hovering-Header Refresh

- ▶ Phishing webpage distributed through embedded links in content.
- ▶ Attackers have created a way to redirect to a different link then displayed when hovering.
- ▶ Individual is redirected to a different site containing email address for cred harvesting.
- ▶ <https://unit42.paloaltonetworks.com/rare-phishing-page-delivery-header-refresh/#:~:text=Unit%2042%20researchers%20observed%20many>

▼ General	
Request URL:	http://impactchd.in/content/bing/ghjkj/1kdeyl61ahaub/bGhhbGxAZWxiY3RyaWNwbHVzLmNvbQ==
Request Method:	GET
Status Code:	200 OK
Remote Address:	192.185.142.85:80
Referrer Policy:	strict-origin-when-cross-origin
▼ Response Headers ☐ Raw	
Connection:	Upgrade, Keep-Alive
Content-Length:	0
Content-Type:	text/html; charset=UTF-8
Date:	Tue, 16 Jul 2024 20:44:49 GMT
Keep-Alive:	timeout=5, max=75
Refresh:	0;url=https://hk6.8ik8rq.ru/hk6/#:~:text=Unit%2042%20researchers%20observed%20many
Server:	Apache
Upgrade:	h2,h2c

What Next?!

- ▶ Copy the Link, paste it in Notepad++.
- ▶ Get ready to analyze!!



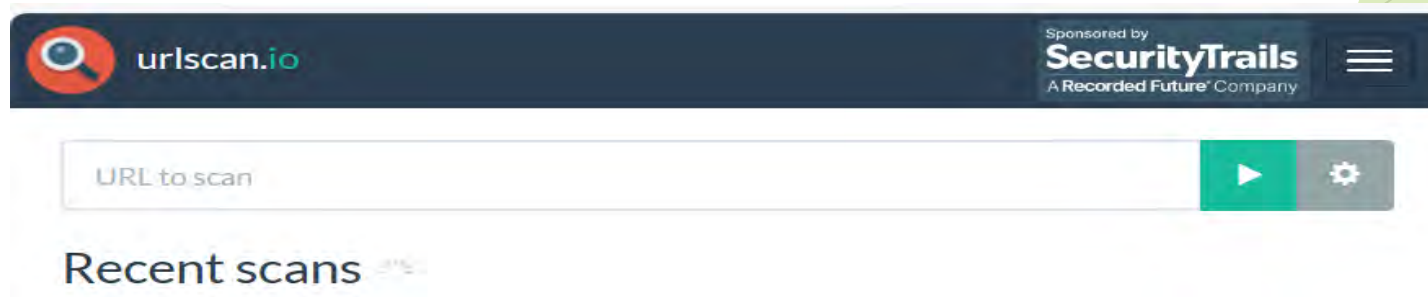
The Best Link Analysis Tools

- ▶ Link analysis tools scan a provided hyperlink providing additional technical details on the validity of a resource.
 - ▶ Most check a known repository of reported malicious sites.
 - ▶ Some scan the page and make a determination.
 - ▶ Few let you interact with the page.

- ▶ Virustotal.com



- ▶ URLscan.io



Virustotal

- ▶ Link analysis tool scans a provided hyperlink for malicious indicators.

The screenshot displays the Virustotal website interface. At the top, the Virustotal logo is visible, followed by the tagline: "Analyze suspicious files, domains, IPs and URLs to detect malware and other breaches, automatically share them with the security community". Below this, there are three tabs: "FILE", "URL", and "SEARCH". The "URL" tab is selected, and a search bar contains the domain "www.thenetdefender.com". Below the search bar, there is a disclaimer: "By submitting data above, you are agreeing to our Terms of Service and Privacy Policy, and to the sharing of your Sample submission with the security community. Please do not submit any personal information; VirusTotal is not responsible for the contents of your submission. Learn more." and a link to "Want to automate submissions? Check our API, free quota grants available for new file uploads".

The results section shows a green circle with the number "0" and the text "No security vendors flagged this domain as malicious". Below this, there is a table with the following columns: "Registrar", "Creation Date", and "Last Updated". The table contains the following data:

Registrar	Creation Date	Last Updated
Google LLC	2 years ago	3 months ago

Below the table, there is a "Security Vendors' Analysis" section with a table showing the results of the analysis. The table has two columns: "Vendor" and "Result". The results are as follows:

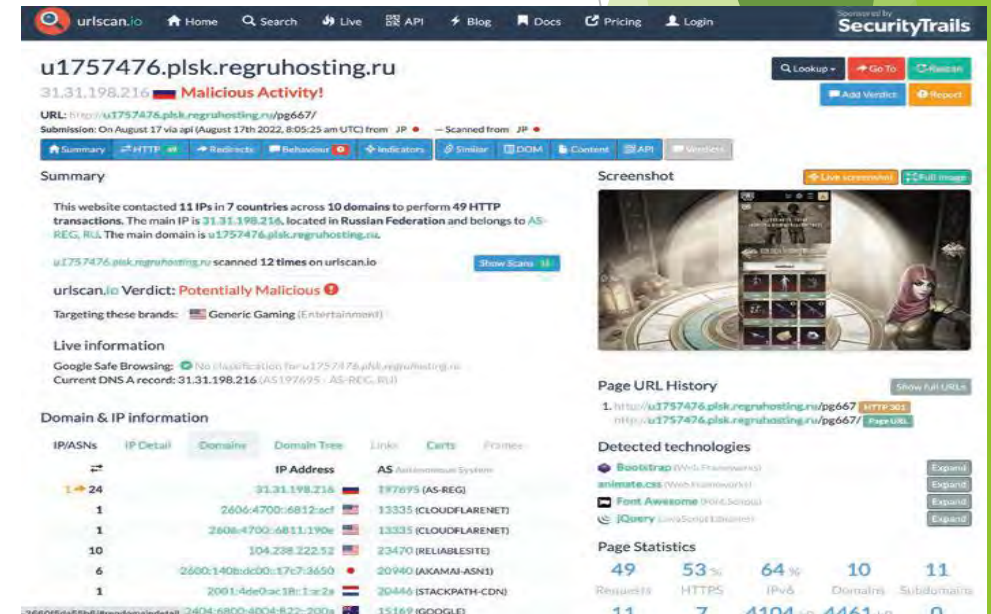
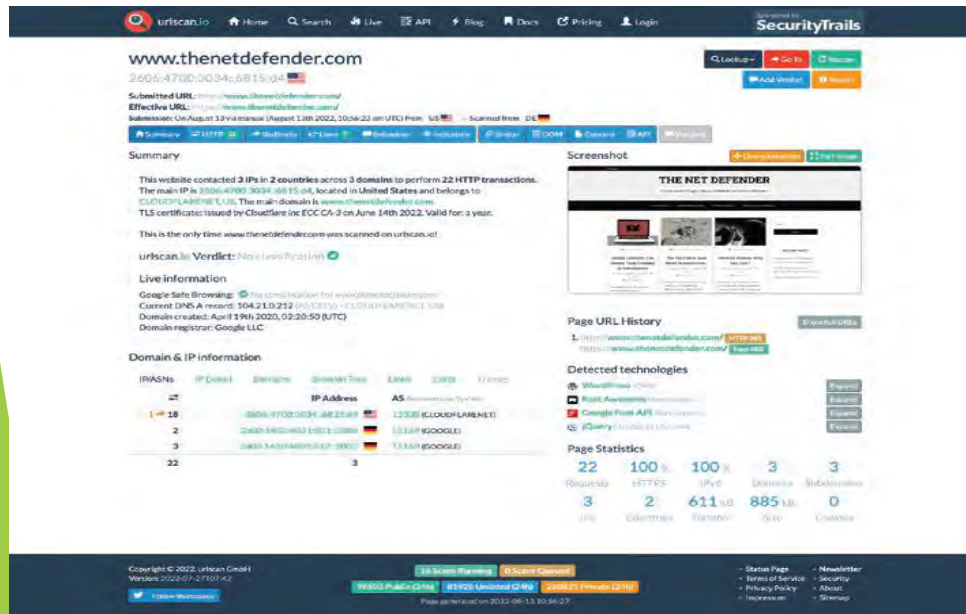
Vendor	Result
Abusix	Clean
ADMINUSLabs	Clean
AlienVault	Clean
Antiy-AVL	Clean
Avira	Clean
Acronis	Clean
AICC (MONITORAPP)	Clean
alphaMountain.ai	Clean
Armit	Clean
BADWARE.INFO	Clean

On the right side of the screenshot, there is a detailed view of the URL analysis results for "http://bit.do/fUCpd". It shows a red circle with the number "13" and the text "13 security vendors flagged this URL as malicious". Below this, there is a table with the following columns: "Vendor", "Result", "Status", and "Time". The table contains the following data:

Vendor	Result	Status	Time
AutoShun	Malicious	200	2022-07-13 13:53:58 UTC
CyRadar	Malicious	200	2022-07-13 13:53:58 UTC
Fortinet	Phishing	200	2022-07-13 13:53:58 UTC
Lionic	Phishing	200	2022-07-13 13:53:58 UTC
PREBYTES	Malware	200	2022-07-13 13:53:58 UTC
Sophos	Phishing	200	2022-07-13 13:53:58 UTC
Webroot	Malicious	200	2022-07-13 13:53:58 UTC
Acronis	Clean	200	2022-07-13 13:53:58 UTC
AICC (MONITORAPP)	Clean	200	2022-07-13 13:53:58 UTC
alphaMountain.ai	Clean	200	2022-07-13 13:53:58 UTC
Avira	Phishing	200	2022-07-13 13:53:58 UTC
Emisoft	Phishing	200	2022-07-13 13:53:58 UTC
Kaspersky	Phishing	200	2022-07-13 13:53:58 UTC
Netcraft	Malicious	200	2022-07-13 13:53:58 UTC
SCUMWARE.org	Malware	200	2022-07-13 13:53:58 UTC
Trustwave	Phishing	200	2022-07-13 13:53:58 UTC
Abusix	Clean	200	2022-07-13 13:53:58 UTC
ADMINUSLabs	Clean	200	2022-07-13 13:53:58 UTC
AlienVault	Clean	200	2022-07-13 13:53:58 UTC
Antiy-AVL	Clean	200	2022-07-13 13:53:58 UTC

URLscan

- Similar, ****BUT grabs a screenshot****



Practical

- ▶ www.virustotal.com
- ▶ www.urlscan.io

- ▶ <https://tinyurl.com/8rxd5hr7>
- ▶ <https://tinyurl.com/5dnctxdp>
- ▶ <https://rb.gy/2pvfj>
- ▶ <https://rb.gy/nh3l4>
- ▶ <https://rb.gy/12drp>
- ▶ <https://rb.gy/1cx7n>
- ▶ <https://tinyurl.com/mvsmdmh8>

Attachments

- Computer files sent with an email message, can contain malicious code!!!



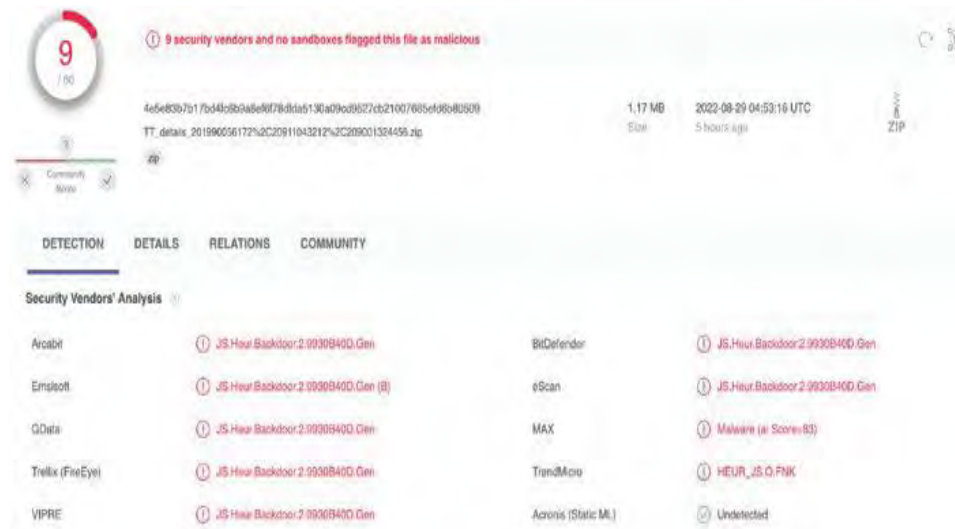
Questions to Ask?

- ▶ Does this make sense?
- ▶ Did I ask for this file?
- ▶ Do I NEED this information for my job?
- ▶ Does the attachment align with the email content?
- ▶ Should I extract this and analyze?

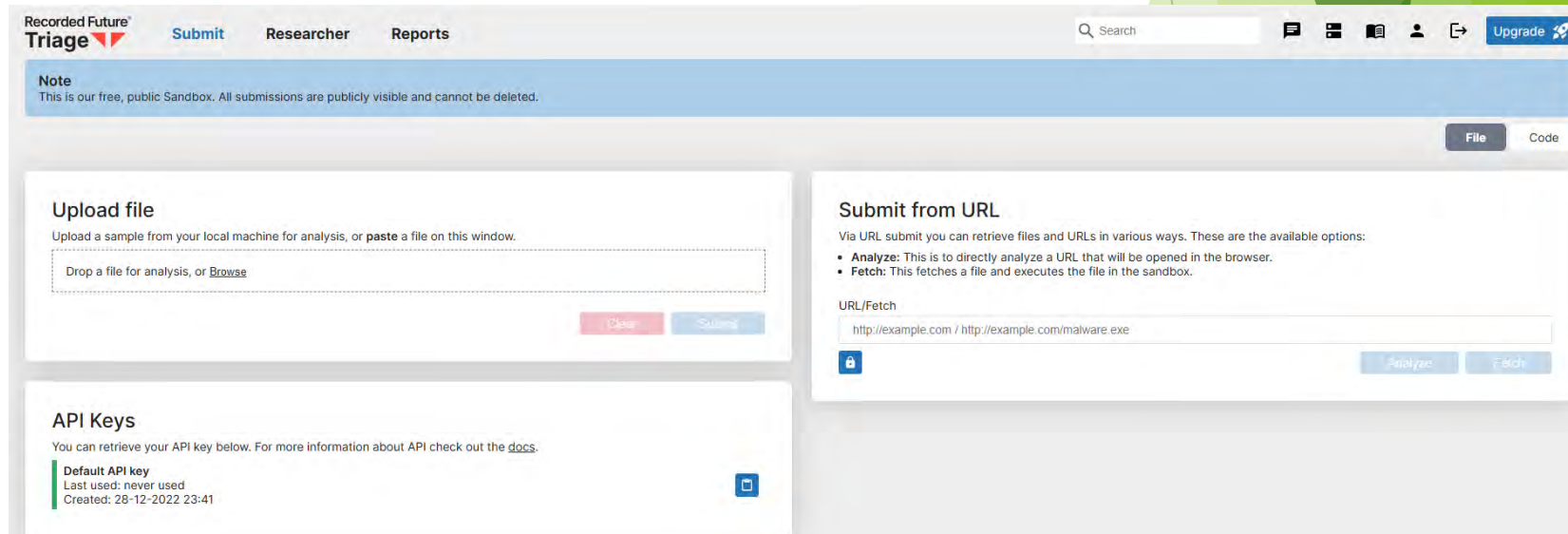


Best Attachment Tools

► VIRUSTOTAL



► Tria.ge- Triage by Recorded Future



Themed Attacks

► IRS

To: [redacted]

SPAM: You are eligible for refund



Hello [redacted],

After the last annual calculations of your fiscal activity we have determined that you are eligible for tax refund under section 501(c) (17) of the Internal Revenue Code.

Please submit the [Tax Refund Request Form](#) and allow us 3-9 days to process it.

Yours faithfully,
Internal Revenue Service
United States Department of the Treasury

Green Dot COVID-19 Benefits

Complete the following appropriately to receive your benefits.

Full Name: First Name: Middle Name: Last Name:

Date of Birth:  SSN: Sex:

Street Address: City:

State: Zip code:

Phone Number: Email Address:

Payment Option

Note: Payments will only be made/apply to a new Green Dot Prepaid Visa Card.

* Visit any green dot retailers nationwide including (7-Eleven, ACE Cash Express, CVS/Pharmacy, Dollar General, Family Dollar, Kmart, Kroger, Rite Aid, Safeway, Walgreens and Walmart) and buy any Green Dot Reloadable Visa Debit Card.

* You will complete the below section with your purchased Green Dot Reloadable Visa Debit Card details and submit along with your application.

* Do not register/activate your Green Dot Reloadable Visa Debit Card.

Card Number:

Expiring Date:
MM YY

CVV/CVC:



----- Forwarded message -----

From: "Unemployment Advisory Department" <support@us-benefits.org>

Date: Jan 16, 2015 10:12 AM

Subject: Required Documents to File Unemployment in MO

To:

Cc:

REQUIRED DOCUMENTS AND INFORMATION TO FILE UNEMPLOYMENT IN MO

Do not apply online for unemployment benefits in City, State before collecting all the information and documentation that will be required. Because of the high number of applicants, and the time it takes to process each one, following directions is extremely important.

Important: In the next step, we're going to check all possible reasons why you might not qualify for unemployment. This is extremely important because if you file and then get denied, you will have to go through a very lengthy appeals process to correct any errors.

=> [Click Here to Continue](#)

Please understand that your chances of getting denied go up the longer you wait to submit your official application.

Don't miss any of your benefit payments. Click the link below:

=> [File Unemployment Online](#)

Support Team

Employment Advisory Department

You are receiving this email because you requested information online

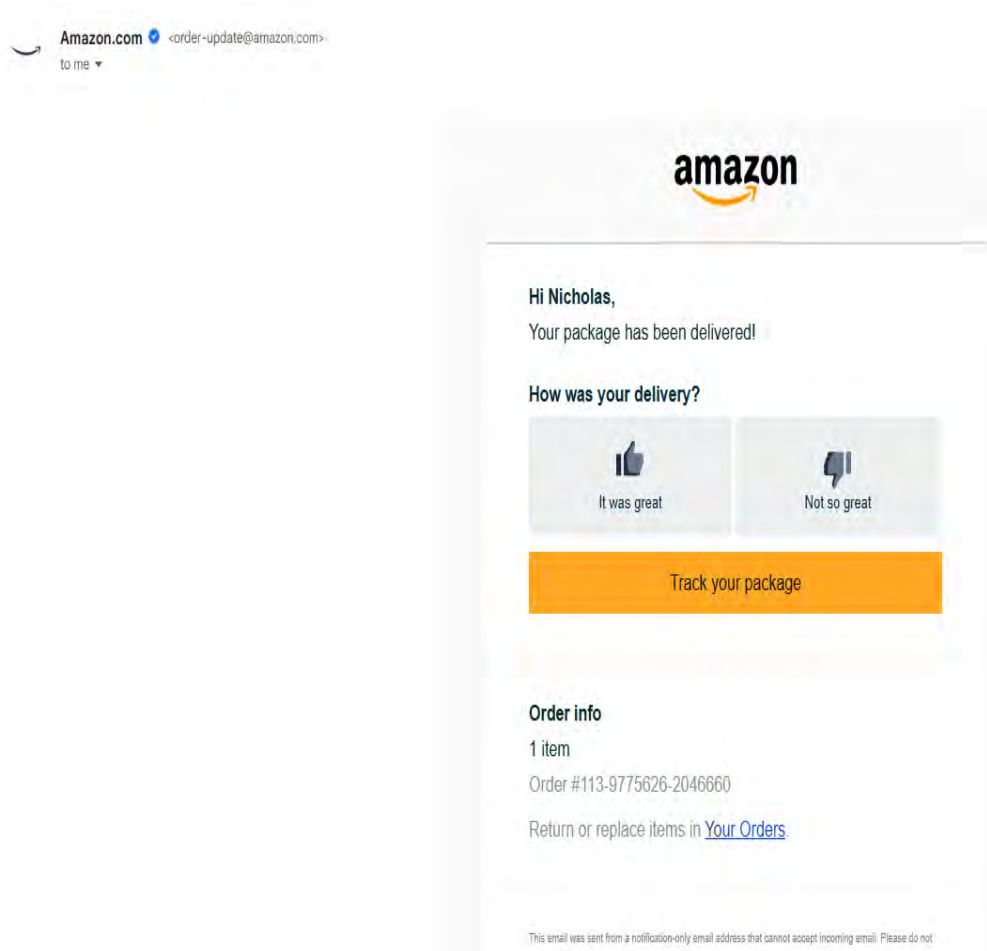
This message was sent to

from:

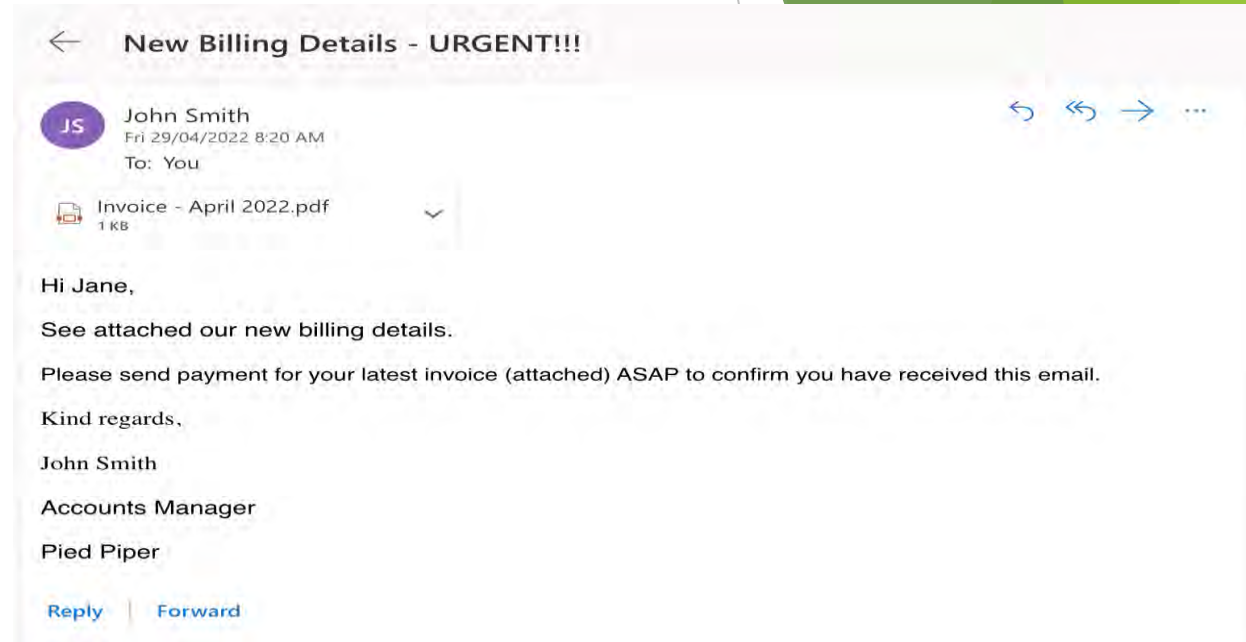
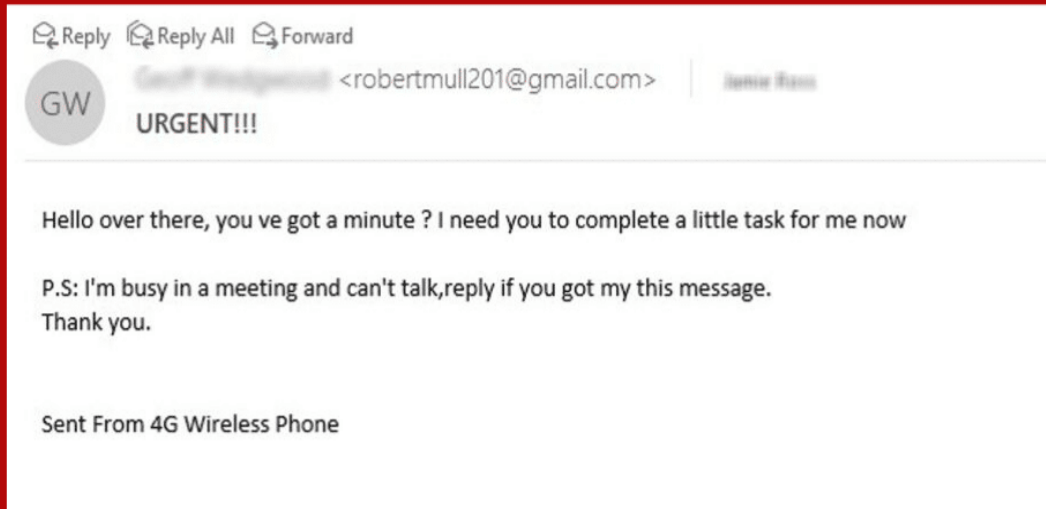
Unemployment Advisory Department | support@us-benefits.org | Employment Advisory | 123 Main Street | NYC, NY 10314

Themed Attacks

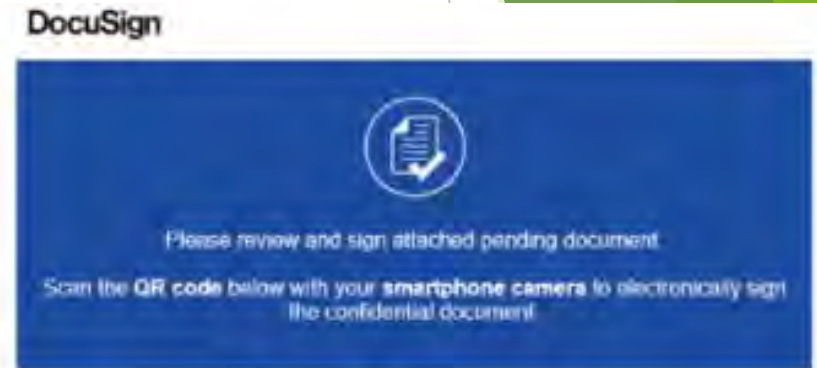
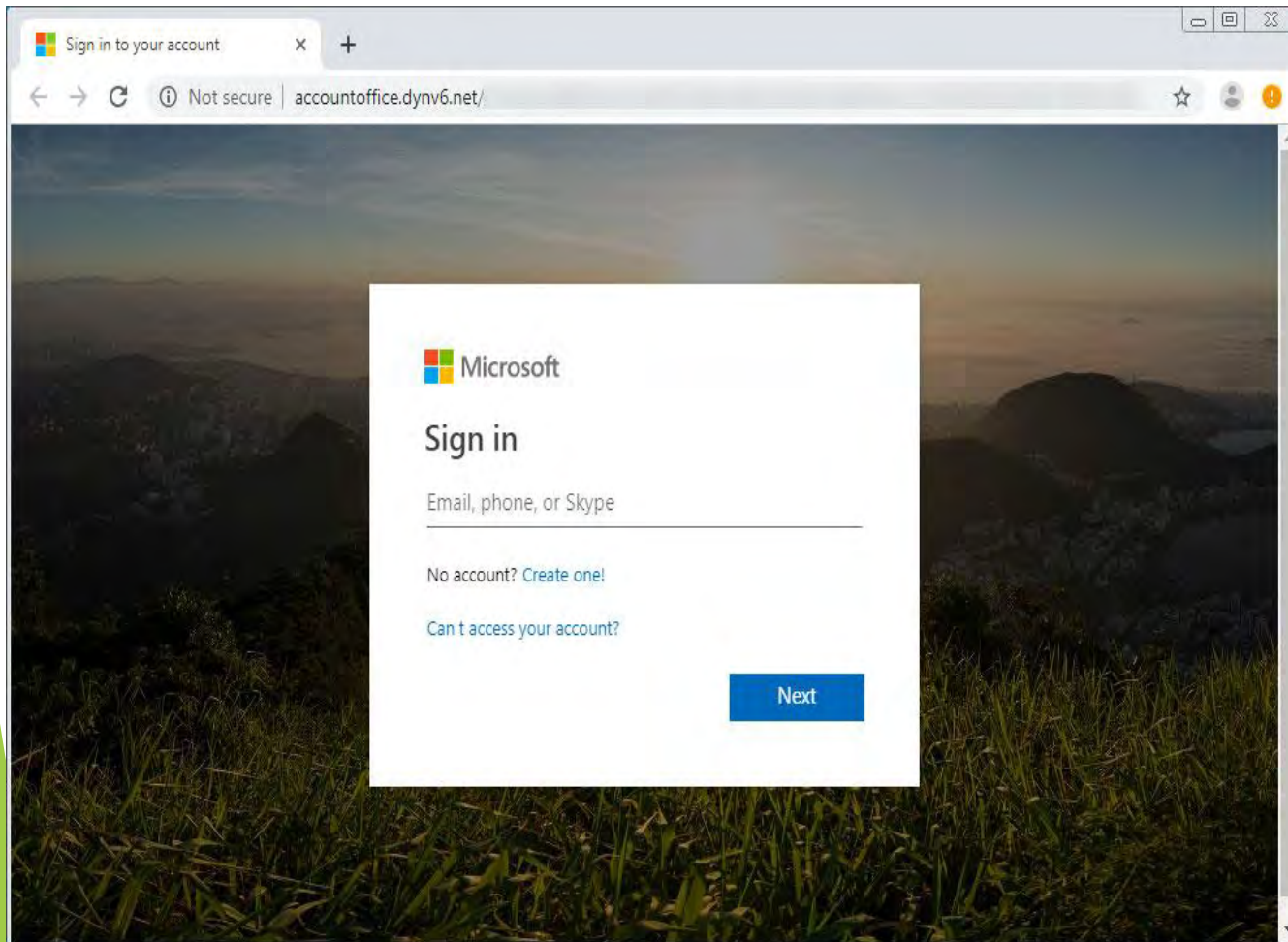
► Package Delivery



Wire Transfers/Gift Cards



Where This Leads



All parties have completed Please DocuSign Document 222E1-07 (REVISED)

No hard copy required when DocuSign is utilized.

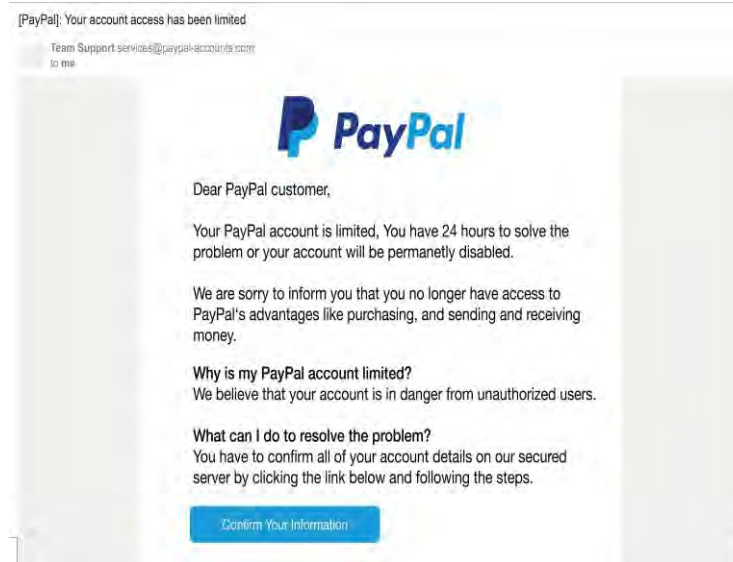
Marist eSignature

What to do?!

- ▶ Report the message!!
 - ▶ Internal security team
 - ▶ Email provider (Google, Yahoo, AOL ect)
- ▶ Share the message
 - ▶ Post on social media
 - ▶ Talk to your friends about it
- ▶ Delete the message



Fix Security Awareness 3 Things



Cyber Resources

Top Podcasts

Cyber Security Headlines (10 minutes)

Cyberwire Daily (40 minutes)

Sans Internet Storm Center (10 Minutes)

Down the Security RabbitHole (60 Minutes)

Darknet Diaries (60 minutes)

Top News Sites

Thehackernews.com

Bleepingcomputer.com

Krebsonsecurity.com

Csoonline.com

Darkreading.com

Top Publications

Verizon Data Breach Investigations Report

IBM Cost of a Data Breach

Mandiant M-Trends

Red Canary Annual Report

▶ Top Tools

1. Virustotal.com

2. Urlscan.io

3. Tria.ge

4. Joesandbox.com

5. Alienvault.com

▶ Top X Feeds

1. @vxunderground

2. @Troyhunt

3. @briankrebs

4. @swiftonsecurity

5. @hacks4pancakes

▶ Top Books

1. The Cuckoo's Egg Clifford Stull

2. Dark Territory Fred Kaplan

3. Fifth Domain Richard Clarke

4. Sandworm Andy Greenburg

5. @War Shane Harris

Questions/Comments

- ▶ Entoo Security
 - ▶ FTC Safeguards
 - ▶ Penetration Tests
 - ▶ vCISO and Consulting
 - ▶ Risk Assessments
 - ▶ Incident Response
 - ▶ Security Awareness Training



Nick Oles

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Cybersecurity Advisor | Educator | Published Author | Cyber and Special Operations Veteran |

Baltimore, Maryland, United States • [Contact info](#)



United States Department of Defense

